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Agenda item 137

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 23 December 2016

[*on the report of the Fifth Committee (A/71/706)*]

71/262. Pattern of conferences

The General Assembly,

Recalling its previous resolutions on the pattern of conferences, including resolution 70/9 of 13 November 2015,

Recalling also its previous resolutions on multilingualism, and reaffirming the provisions relating to conference services thereon, in particular resolution 69/324 of 11 September 2015,

Reaffirming its resolution 42/207 C of 11 December 1987, in which it requested the Secretary-General to ensure the equal treatment of the official languages of the United Nations,

Having considered the report of the Committee on Conferences for 2016[1] and the relevant report of the Secretary-General,[2]

Having also considered the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions,[3]

Reaffirming the role of the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly in administrative and budgetary matters,

Recalling its resolution 14 (I) of 13 February 1946 and the role of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions as a subsidiary body of the General Assembly,

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Seventy-first Session, Supplement No. 32* (A/71/32).
[2] A/71/116.
[3] A/71/549.

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I

Calendar of conferences and meetings

1. *Welcomes* the report of the Committee on Conferences for 2016;[1]

2. *Approves* the draft revised calendar of conferences and meetings of the United Nations for 2017, as submitted by the Committee on Conferences,[4] taking into account the observations of the Committee and subject to the provisions of the present resolution;

3. *Authorizes* the Committee on Conferences to make any adjustments to the revised calendar of conferences and meetings for 2017 that may become necessary as a result of actions and decisions taken by the General Assembly at its seventy-first session;

4. *Notes with satisfaction* that the Secretariat has taken into account the arrangements referred to in General Assembly resolutions 53/208 A of 18 December 1998, 54/248 of 23 December 1999, 55/222 of 23 December 2000, 56/242 of 24 December 2001, 57/283 B of 15 April 2003, 58/250 of 23 December 2003, 59/265 of 23 December 2004, 60/236 A of 23 December 2005, 61/236 of 22 December 2006, 62/225 of 22 December 2007, 63/248 of 24 December 2008, 64/230 of 22 December 2009, 65/245 of 24 December 2010, 66/233 of 24 December 2011, 67/237 of 24 December 2012 and 68/251 of 27 December 2013 concerning Orthodox Good Friday and the official holidays of Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha, and requests all intergovernmental bodies to observe those decisions when planning their meetings;

5. *Also notes with satisfaction* that the Secretariat has taken into account the arrangements referred to in relevant resolutions of the General Assembly regarding the pattern of conferences, including resolution 69/250 of 29 December 2014 concerning Yom Kippur, the Day of Vesak, Diwali, Gurpurab and Orthodox Christmas, and requests all relevant intergovernmental bodies to continue to observe the applicable decisions when planning their meetings;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to ensure that any modification to the calendar of conferences and meetings is implemented strictly in accordance with the mandate of the Committee on Conferences and other relevant resolutions of the General Assembly;

7. *Invites* Member States to include in new legislative mandates adequate information on the modalities for the organization of conferences or meetings;

8. *Recalls* rule 153 of its rules of procedure, and, for resolutions involving expenditure, requests the Secretary-General to include the modalities of conferences, taking into account the trends of similar meetings, with a view to mobilizing conference services and documentation in the most efficient and cost-effective manner possible;

9. *Reaffirms* the need to address the issue of duplications and redundancies in conference servicing, and notes in this regard that the Economic and Social Council decided, in its resolution 2013/13 of 22 July 2013, to consider at a later date

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[4] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Seventy-first Session, Supplement No. 32* (A/71/32), annex II.

the necessity of reviewing its provisional biennial calendar of conferences and meetings in the light of the ongoing intergovernmental consultations on the further strengthening of the Council;

II

Utilization of conference-servicing resources

10. *Reaffirms* the practice that, in the use of conference rooms, priority must be given to meetings of Member States;

11. *Calls upon* the Secretary-General and Member States to adhere to the guidelines and procedures contained in the administrative instruction for the authorization of the use of United Nations premises for meetings, conferences, special events and exhibits;[5]

12. *Emphasizes* that such meetings, conferences, special events and exhibits must be consistent with the purposes and principles of the United Nations;

13. *Notes* that the overall utilization factor for all calendar bodies at the four main duty stations in 2015 was 80 per cent, as it was in 2014, as compared with 78 per cent in 2013, and thus met the established benchmark of 80 per cent;

14. *Requests* the Committee on Conferences to consult those bodies that have consistently utilized less than the applicable benchmark of their allocated resources for the past six years, with a view to making appropriate recommendations in order to achieve the optimum utilization of conference-servicing resources;

15. *Urges* the secretariats and bureaux of bodies that underutilize their conference-servicing resources to work more closely with the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management of the Secretariat and to consider changes to their programmes of work, as appropriate, including adjustments based on previous patterns of recurring agenda items, with a view to making improvements in their utilization factors;

16. *Urges* those intergovernmental bodies whose average utilization factor has for the past six years been below the benchmark of 80 per cent to take that factor into account when planning their future sessions in order to achieve that benchmark;

17. *Reiterates its request* to intergovernmental bodies to review their meeting entitlements and to plan and adjust their programmes of work on the basis of their actual utilization of conference-servicing resources in order to improve their efficient use of conference services;

18. *Recognizes* that late starts and unplanned early endings seriously affect the utilization factor of the bodies owing to the amount of time lost, and invites the secretariats and bureaux of bodies to pay adequate attention to avoiding late starts and unplanned early endings;

19. *Welcomes* the steps taken by those bodies that have adjusted their programmes of work in order to achieve the optimum utilization of conference-servicing resources;

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[5] ST/AI/416.

20. *Also welcomes* the efforts undertaken by the Secretary-General to increase the utilization rates of conference-servicing resources, and in this regard encourages the Secretary-General to enhance the efficiency of conference servicing and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its seventy-second session;

21. *Requests* the Secretary-General to consult Member States on initiatives that affect the utilization of conference services and conference facilities;

22. *Notes* that for meetings held in New York of bodies entitled to meet "as required", 97 per cent of requests for interpretation were met in 2015, as compared with 97 per cent in 2014 and 98 per cent in 2013, and requests the Secretary-General to continue to impress upon such bodies the need to continue to improve the utilization of the conference services provided and to report on the provision of conference services to those bodies through the Committee on Conferences;

23. *Recognizes* the importance of meetings of regional and other major groupings of Member States for the smooth functioning of the sessions of intergovernmental bodies, requests the Secretary-General to ensure that, as far as possible, all requests for conference services for the meetings of regional and other major groupings of Member States are met, and requests the Secretariat to inform the requesters as early as possible about the availability of conference services, including interpretation, as well as about any changes that might occur before the holding of meetings;

24. *Notes* that the percentage of meetings held by regional and other major groupings of Member States that were provided with interpretation services at the four main duty stations was 83 per cent in 2015, as compared with 85 per cent in 2014 and 93 per cent in 2013, and requests the Secretary-General to continue to employ innovative means to address the difficulties experienced by Member States owing to the lack of conference services for some meetings of regional and other major groupings of Member States and to report thereon to the General Assembly through the Committee on Conferences;

25. *Once again urges* intergovernmental bodies to spare no effort at the planning stage to take into account the meetings of regional and other major groupings of Member States, to make provision for such meetings in their programmes of work and to notify conference services, well in advance, of any cancellations so that unutilized conference-servicing resources may, to the extent possible, be reassigned to meetings of regional and other major groupings of Member States;

26. *Welcomes* the efforts of all users of conference services to inform the Secretariat as early as possible of any cancellation of service requests so as to allow for such services to be smoothly redeployed to other meetings;

27. *Notes with satisfaction* that, in accordance with several resolutions of the General Assembly, including resolution 70/9, paragraph 23, in conformity with the headquarters rule, all meetings of Nairobi-based United Nations bodies were held in Nairobi in 2015, and requests the Secretary-General to report thereon to the Assembly at its seventy-second session through the Committee on Conferences;

28. *Notes* the ongoing efforts aimed at improving the conference facilities at the Economic Commission for Africa, and in this regard encourages the Secretary-General to ensure that the improvement of the facilities, in particular Africa Hall, is completed in a timely manner;

29. *Recognizes* the improvement in the rate of utilization of the conference centre of the Economic Commission for Africa, and in this regard requests the Secretary-General to continue to explore, including with partners such as the African Union, additional means to increase the utilization of the conference centre and to report thereon, including on the impact of the initiatives of the Commission, to the General Assembly;

30. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to encourage the heads of entities of the United Nations system to use as a matter of priority, when applicable, the conference centre of the Economic Commission for Africa to ensure greater utilization of the conference facilities;

31. *Recognizes* the proactive efforts of the Secretary-General to identify ways to enhance efficiency and effectiveness in conference services;

32. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue his efforts aimed at improving conference servicing at the four main duty stations, including through addressing or eliminating possible duplication, overlap and redundancy, and identifying innovative ideas, potential synergies and other cost-saving measures, without compromising quality or affecting the provision of services, and to report annually on the progress made in this regard;

33. *Re-emphasizes* the need to continue to improve all conference facilities, including the videoconferencing infrastructure, at all four main duty stations and at the regional commissions, and in this regard requests the Secretary-General to report thereon no later than at the seventy-second session of the General Assembly;

34. *Welcomes* the measures taken to ensure access to and use of conference services and conference facilities for persons with disabilities, including the establishment of the Accessibility Centre, and encourages the Secretary-General to continue further efforts in this regard and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its seventy-second session;

35. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to address issues related to the accessibility of conference facilities as a matter of priority and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its seventy-second session;

36. *Welcomes* the integrated global management rule as an efficient approach, where feasible, to servicing meetings away from duty stations, in this regard requests the Secretary-General to strengthen his efforts to realize further savings by rigorously applying the integrated global management rule to applicable meetings, without jeopardizing the quality of services, and to report thereon to the Committee on Conferences at its substantive session in 2017, and also requests the Secretary-General to continue to report on the financial savings achieved through the implementation of the integrated global management projects;

III

Leveraging technology and measuring the quality of conference services

37. *Notes with appreciation* the efforts of the Secretary-General in the context of the integrated global management initiative to establish and implement at the four main duty stations common performance indicators and single information technology systems (such as gData, gDoc, gMeets and gText), and requests the Secretary-General to report thereon to the General Assembly at its seventy-second session;

38. *Takes note* of the progress made in the development and implementation of the conference management software gData, gDoc, gMeets and gText, and requests the Secretary-General to include all relevant information on their operation, maintenance and harmonization with existing systems, as appropriate, in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019;

39. *Recalls* paragraph 24 of the report of the Secretary-General on the pattern of conferences,[6] and requests the Secretary-General to complete internal reviews concerning accountability mechanisms and the clear delineation of responsibility between the Under-Secretary-General for General Assembly and Conference Management and the Directors-General of the United Nations Offices at Geneva, Nairobi and Vienna for conference management policies, operations and resource utilization, requests the Secretary-General to report thereon to the General Assembly at its seventy-second session, and in this regard recalls section III, paragraph 15, of its resolution 66/233, section III, paragraph 2, of its resolution 67/237, paragraph 38 of its resolution 68/251, paragraph 48 of its resolution 69/250 and paragraph 37 of its resolution 70/9;

40. *Notes* the initiatives undertaken in the context of integrated global management aimed at streamlining procedures, achieving economies of scale and improving the quality of conference services, and in this regard stresses the importance of ensuring the equal treatment of conference-servicing staff, as well as the principle of equal grade for equal work at the four main duty stations;

41. *Reiterates* that the satisfaction of Member States is a key performance indicator in conference management and conference services;

42. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to ensure that measures taken by the Department to seek the evaluation by Member States of the quality of the conference services provided to them, as a key performance indicator of the Department, provide equal opportunities to Member States to present their evaluations in the six official languages of the United Nations and are in full compliance with relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, and further requests the Secretary-General to report to the Assembly, through the Committee on Conferences, on progress made in this regard;

43. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to continue to explore best practices and techniques in client satisfaction evaluations, to seek a larger rate of response to surveys on quality and to report regularly to the General Assembly on the results achieved;

44. *Welcomes* the efforts made by the Department to seek the evaluation by Member States of the quality of the conference services provided to them, taking into consideration comments and complaints raised by Member States either in writing or during meetings, and requests the Secretary-General to intensify his exploration of innovative ways to systematically capture and analyse feedback from Member States and Chairs and Secretaries of committees on the quality of conference services and to report thereon to the General Assembly through the Committee on Conferences;

45. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to seek evaluation of the quality of the conference services provided by the Secretariat through meetings held at least once a year, but not exceeding twice a year, guaranteeing that Member

[6] A/70/122.

States are able to present their evaluations and seek information equally in any of the six official languages of the United Nations on any conference-related or language-specific matter;

46. *Acknowledges* that the concept of integrated global management has been fully mainstreamed into all areas of the conference services across the four main conference-servicing duty stations, and requests the Secretary-General to keep the General Assembly and its Committee on Conferences apprised of progress made in ensuring integrated global management and to provide accurate and up-to-date information on new initiatives falling under the purview of the Committee;

IV

Matters related to documentation and publications

47. *Emphasizes* the paramount importance of the equality of the six official languages of the United Nations;

48. *Underlines* that all the initiatives on the evolution of the working methods, including those introduced on a trial basis, shall comply with the principle of parity among the official languages of the Organization, with a view to preserving or enhancing the quality and scope of the services provided by the Secretariat;

49. *Emphasizes* the importance of multilingualism in the activities of the United Nations, and requests the Secretary-General to redouble his efforts to ensure full parity among the six official languages in accordance with General Assembly resolution 69/324 and to report thereon to the Assembly at its seventy-second session;

50. *Recalls* paragraph 69 of its resolution 69/250, welcomes the appointment of the Under-Secretary-General for General Assembly and Conference Management as the Coordinator for Multilingualism, responsible for the overall implementation of multilingualism Secretariat-wide, and emphasizes the need for the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat to continue to inform the public about the importance of this principle;

51. *Emphasizes* that multilingualism, as a core value of the Organization, entails the active involvement and commitment of all stakeholders, including all United Nations duty stations and offices away from Headquarters;

52. *Notes with concern* the recurring late issuance of documents for the Fifth Committee, recalls paragraph 29 of its resolution 70/247 of 23 December 2015, and requests the Secretary-General to take immediate actions for its effective implementation, taking into account the responsibilities of all stakeholders involved, and to report thereon in the context of his next report on the pattern of conferences;

53. *Recalls* paragraph 69 of its resolution 69/250, and requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-first session detailed terms of reference for the Coordinator for Multilingualism containing, inter alia, key responsibilities, working modalities, tasks, priorities, a programme of work, reporting lines and anticipated support, in full compliance with relevant provisions of Assembly resolutions;

54. *Reaffirms* its decision, in section IV of its resolution 64/230, that all reports adopted by the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review of the Human Rights Council shall be issued as documents in all official languages of the

United Nations in a timely manner before their consideration by the Council, in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 36/117 A of 10 December 1981, 51/211 A to E of 18 December 1996, 52/214 of 22 December 1997, 53/208 A to E of 18 December 1998 and 59/265, and requests the Secretary-General to ensure the support necessary to that effect and to report to the Assembly thereon at its seventy-second session;

55. *Recalls* section III, paragraph 5, of its resolution 55/222, and reiterates with concern its request that the Secretary-General ensure strict respect for the rules concerning the simultaneous distribution of documents in all six official languages as regards both the distribution of printed copies and the posting of parliamentary documentation on the Official Document System and the United Nations website;

56. *Stresses* that matters related to conference management, including documentation, fall within the purview of the Fifth Committee;

57. *Reiterates* the importance of the timely issuance of documents for the Fifth Committee;

58. *Welcomes* the efforts made by the Secretariat, in particular the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, regarding the timely availability of pre-session documentation for the Fifth Committee in the six official languages of the United Nations, and encourages continued efforts by all stakeholders in this regard;

59. *Takes note* of the work done by the interdepartmental task force on documentation chaired by the Department in positively addressing the problem of issuance of documents for the Fifth Committee;

60. *Welcomes* the continued efforts of the task force to shepherd the submission of documents by the author departments of the Secretariat;

61. *Encourages* the Chairs of the Fifth Committee and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions to continue to promote cooperation between the two bodies in the sphere of documentation;

62. *Notes* that accurate, timely and consistent information provided by the Secretariat to the Fifth Committee during its informal consultations facilitates the decision-making process in the Committee;

63. *Also notes* that the effects of workload-sharing in the context of global document management remain minimal, and requests the Secretary-General to continue to seek ways to promote workload-sharing among the four main duty stations and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its seventy-second session;

64. *Emphasizes* that the major goals of the Department are to provide high-quality documents in a timely manner in all official languages, in accordance with established regulations, as well as high-quality conference services to Member States at all duty stations, and to achieve those aims as efficiently and cost-effectively as possible, in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly;

65. *Also emphasizes* the importance of enhancing accountability within the Secretariat for the timely production and delivery of documents by ensuring that managers are fully informed of their responsibilities;

66. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to include in the senior managers' compacts the new standard managerial indicator related to the timely issuance of official documentation to intergovernmental bodies and General Assembly committees and to report thereon in future progress reports on accountability;

67. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to include in the relevant sections of future budget proposals, under executive direction and management, an expected accomplishment of the Secretariat related to the timely submission of documentation needed for meetings of relevant intergovernmental bodies;

68. *Notes with satisfaction* that 99 per cent of the documents submitted on time and within the word limit were processed within four weeks by the Department at Headquarters, and stresses the importance of all the duty stations taking measures to reach their targets in this regard;

69. *Reaffirms* its decision in section III, paragraph 9, of its resolution 59/265 that the issuance of documents in all six official languages on planning, budgetary and administrative matters requiring urgent consideration by the General Assembly shall be accorded priority;

70. *Reiterates its request* that the Secretary-General direct all departments of the Secretariat to include the following elements in their reports:

(*a*) A summary of the report;

(*b*) Consolidated conclusions, recommendations and other proposed actions;

(*c*) Relevant background information;

71. *Reiterates its request* that all documents submitted to legislative organs, including the Committee on Conferences, by the Secretariat and intergovernmental and expert bodies for consideration and action have conclusions and recommendations in bold print;

72. *Notes with concern* that only 72 per cent of the author departments reached the compliance rate of 90 per cent in the timely submission of their reports to the Department, and reiterates its request that the Secretary-General enforce the slotting system more rigorously through a dedicated focus, such as the interdepartmental task force on documentation, and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its seventy-second session;

73. *Urges* author departments to fully adhere to deadlines in meeting the goal of 90 per cent submission compliance, and requests the Secretary-General to ensure that documents submitted late do not adversely affect the issuance of documents submitted on time and in compliance with set guidelines;

74. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to report to the General Assembly on concrete measures taken by author departments and the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management to improve the predictability of document delivery and ensure accountability for the meeting of deadlines in order to ensure the timely issuance of documentation;

75. *Reiterates its request* in paragraph 80 of its resolution 70/9 that the Secretary-General provide information on the waiver process for documents that are submitted over the word limit;

76. *Emphasizes* the role of Member States and their intergovernmental bodies in determining the policies on conference management;

77. *Stresses* that proposals to change such policies are to be approved by Member States in their relevant intergovernmental bodies;

78. *Notes* that the Official Document System is the official digital repository of the United Nations, and welcomes its modernization and its accessibility in all six official languages of the United Nations;

79. *Notes with encouragement* the ongoing efforts related to the technological advancement aimed at improving the accessibility of the Official Document System, including the introduction of a portable Official Document System, and encourages the Secretary-General to continue his efforts in this regard;

80. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue his efforts aimed at improving the deployment of technological tools and facilities in conference servicing with a view to facilitating the decision-making process by intergovernmental bodies;

81. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to upload all important older United Nations documents onto the United Nations website in all six official languages on a priority basis so that these archives will also be available to Member States and the general public;

82. *Further requests* the Secretary-General to take all measures necessary to ensure that the digitization of key documents in the Dag Hammarskjöld Library and in the main duty stations is completed in a timely manner, as appropriate;

83. *Recalls* paragraph 86 of its resolution 70/9, and in this regard requests the Secretary-General to entrust the Department of Public Information with presenting a proposal for the digitization of important older United Nations documents at all four main duty stations for consideration by the General Assembly through the Committee on Information no later than at the main part of its seventy-second session, outlining, inter alia, the definition of important older United Nations documents, as well as the scope and estimated quantity, cost and time frame;

84. *Expresses concern* that the anticipated lengthy digitization project may jeopardize the retention of historical knowledge and information in view of the delicate state and risk of breakage of many of the related documents;

85. *Requests* the Secretary-General to seek additional voluntary contributions for the digitization of important older United Nations documents, including by broadening the donor base, and to report thereon in the context of the report requested in paragraph 82 above;

86. *Recalls* paragraph 104 of its resolution 69/250, notes the increased use of digital recordings by other intergovernmental bodies, including the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, and requests the Secretary-General to continue to report to the General Assembly in this regard;

87. *Stresses* that verbatim and summary records remain the only official records of the meetings of United Nations bodies;

88. *Reiterates* paragraph 105 of its resolution 69/250;

89. *Recalls* paragraph 5 of its resolution 49/221 B of 23 December 1994, and stresses that the timely issuance of verbatim records constitutes an important part of the services provided to Member States;

V

Matters related to language services

90. *Requests* the Secretary-General to redouble his efforts to ensure the highest quality of interpretation and translation services in all six official languages;

91. *Underlines* that the translation of official documents of the Organization must be provided in all required languages and in due time, in full compliance with the rules of procedure of the respective legislative bodies;

92. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to ensure that the terminology used in the translation and interpretation services reflects the latest linguistic norms and terminology of the official languages in order to ensure the highest quality;

93. *Notes* that the pool of language professionals at duty stations is uneven in terms of language combinations, and requests the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to develop recruitment, subcontracting and outreach policies that take full account of these imbalances and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its seventy-second session;

94. *Requests* the Secretary-General to ensure that all language services are given equal treatment and are provided with equally favourable working conditions and resources, with a view to achieving the maximum quality of services, with full respect for the specificities of the six official languages and taking into account their respective workloads;

95. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to take measures to ensure equal treatment of all six official languages and equal quality of service for Member States, while fully respecting the specificities of each official language and different levels of benefit from information technology advances for different languages, including by addressing workload inequities arising from staffing structures and specificities of language, and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its seventy-second session;

96. *Reiterates* the need for the Secretary-General to ensure the compatibility of technologies used in all duty stations and to ensure that they are user-friendly in all official languages;

97. *Notes* the development of an experimental statistical machine translation system (Tapta4UN) to accelerate translation services for some categories of documents, and requests the Secretary-General to report on updates, including cost-benefit analysis and quality preservation and control, about this system to the General Assembly at its seventy-second session, through the Committee on Conferences;

98. *Recalls* section VII of its resolution 69/274 A of 2 April 2015, and requests the Secretary-General to ensure that the implementation of flexible workplace strategies takes into account the needs of language staff in order to continue to ensure that the services provided to Member States meet the highest standard of quality;

99. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to maintain and update the global terminology portal in order to ensure its availability to United Nations staff, Member States and the general public with a view to achieving harmonization of the terminology used at all United Nations duty stations;

100. *Also requests* the Secretary-General, as the Chair of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, to continue to invite the heads of participating funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations system to consider using official United Nations terminology and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its seventy-second session;

101. *Reaffirms* paragraph 98 of its resolution 70/9, and reiterates its request that the Secretary-General, when recruiting temporary assistance in the language services, including through the use of international or local contracts, as appropriate, ensure that all language services are given equal treatment and are provided with equally favourable working conditions and resources, with a view to achieving maximum quality of their services, with full respect for the specificities of each of the six official languages and taking into account their respective workloads;

102. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue his efforts aimed at decreasing the vacancy rates for language professionals at the United Nations Office at Nairobi and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its seventy-second session;

103. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to fill vacancies in the language services, in particular in the translation services, in a timely manner and in full compliance with relevant provisions of the General Assembly resolutions governing recruitment for language staff, and to report thereon to the Assembly at its seventy-second session;

104. *Further requests* the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to hold competitive examinations for the recruitment of language staff sufficiently in advance in order to fill current and future vacancies in the language services in a timely manner and to inform the General Assembly at its future sessions of efforts in this regard;

105. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to make every effort to enhance access to competitive examinations for applicants in all regions by bringing, to the extent possible, examination sites closer to their locations in order to allow the greatest number of potentially qualified candidates to participate in them, and to report to the General Assembly at its future sessions on progress made in this regard;

106. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to continue to improve the quality of translation of documents into the six official languages, giving particular significance to the accuracy of translation;

107. *Reiterates* paragraph 8 of the annex to its resolution 2 (I) of 1 February 1946 on the rules of procedure concerning languages, whereby all resolutions and other important documents shall be made available in the official languages and, upon the request of any representative, any other document shall be made available in any or all of the official languages;

108. *Stresses* the need to ensure the highest possible quality of contractual and in-house translation, and requests the Secretary-General to report on measures to be taken in this regard;

109. *Reiterates its request* that the Secretary-General provide, at all duty stations, adequate staff at the appropriate level, with a view to ensuring appropriate quality control for external translation, with due consideration of the principle of equal grade for equal work;

110. *Requests* the Secretary-General to apply common standards for the quality control of documents processed by external translators in all four duty stations in order to ensure high-quality translations in the six official languages of the United Nations, and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its future sessions;

111. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to ensure that the experience, lessons learned and best practices of the main duty stations in performing quality control of contractual and in-house translations, including on requirements relating to the number and appropriate level of staff needed to carry out this function, are shared among duty stations and regional commissions, as appropriate;

112. *Notes* that the Secretary-General has established globally standardized performance indicators and costing models aimed at a more cost-effective strategy for the in-house processing of documents;

113. *Notes with appreciation* the measures taken by the Secretary-General, in accordance with its resolutions, to address, among other things, the issue of the replacement of retiring staff in the language services, and requests the Secretary-General to maintain and intensify those efforts, including the strengthening of cooperation with institutions that train language specialists, in order to meet the needs in the six official languages of the United Nations;

114. *Notes* the need for energetic measures to avoid a disruptive shortage of applicants and a high turnover rate in the language career fields, particularly where rare language combinations are involved, and requests the Secretary-General to use appropriate means to improve the internship programme, including through partnerships with organizations that promote the official languages of the United Nations;

115. *Welcomes* the existing memorandums of understanding between the Organization and 23 universities as a way to strengthen the training of language professionals in order to improve the recruitment of qualified language staff, and requests the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to assess the appropriate number of memorandums of understanding in order to fulfil the needs of the Organization;

116. *Requests* the Secretary-General to make further concerted efforts to promote outreach programmes, such as traineeships and internships, and to introduce innovative methods to increase awareness of the programmes, including through partnerships with Member States, relevant international organizations and language institutions in all regions, in particular to close the wide gap of qualified candidates from Africa and from the Latin American and Caribbean region, and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its seventy-second session;

117. *Notes* that the "African project" has the aim of establishing postgraduate university programmes in translation, conference interpreting and public service interpreting through centres of excellence on the African continent, and requests the Secretary-General to continue to report on the achievements of this project;

118. *Also notes* the difficulties in identifying and retaining qualified language professionals and the need to replenish the pool of language experts at the main duty stations, particularly New York and Nairobi, in order to prevent further negative impact on the capacity of the Secretariat to provide services in the six official languages of the United Nations;

119. *Welcomes* the efforts made by the Secretary-General to raise awareness among all Member States and the general public of career opportunities in conference services, including through the increased use of social media;

120. *Notes* the update provided by the Secretary-General on the pilot project related to the outposting to Vienna of translators from the French Translation Service in New York, and requests the Secretary-General to provide to the General Assembly at its seventy-second session further updates on this matter, including on the quality of services, a cost-benefit analysis, information on workload-sharing and lessons learned;

121. *Notes with appreciation* the positive experience with language traineeships in training young professionals and in attracting them to the United Nations, while enhancing the pool of qualified language professionals in language combinations that are critical for succession-planning purposes, and encourages the Secretary-General to continue his efforts in this regard;

122. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to improve and strengthen his initiatives related to training and replenishing the language capacity of the Organization, including through the outreach programmes, in order to ensure sufficient capacity to address the interpretation and translation requirements of the Organization;

123. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to continue to liaise with permanent missions to identify outreach opportunities with universities, educational institutions and language learning centres located worldwide in order to ensure the continued availability of high-quality professional language services in the six official languages of the United Nations;

124. *Further requests* the Secretary-General to continue to improve and expand the list of universities having memorandums of understanding with the United Nations, ensuring the inclusion of universities, educational institutions and language learning centres located in all geographical regions, whenever possible;

125. *Requests* the Secretary-General to refrain from making any change of a substantive nature to agreed texts of both draft and adopted resolutions and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its seventy-second session;

126. *Recalls* section IV of its resolution 69/274 A, and requests the Secretary-General to keep the working conditions of interpreters under review.

68th plenary meeting
23 December 2016